

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00252 01 OF 02 040311Z

70

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAM-01 OMB-01 /093 W

----- 036899

R 021230Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5068

INFO TAMEMBASSY ALGIERS 357

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

FOSIF ROTA

COMSIXTHFLT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 0252

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PBOR SOPN MR AG SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT SPEAKS OUT

SUMMARY: FOR FIRST TIME SINCE BEGINNING OF SAHARA DISPUTE, MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT HAS LASHED OUT PUBLICLY AT ALGEGIAN POLICY. SPEAKING BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MAURITANIA'S SINGLE POLITICAL PARTY, OULD DADDAH REVIEWED HISTORY OF DISPUTE, EMPHASIZING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITH ALGERIA. HIS COMMENTS, SOME OF WHICH ARE SURPRISINGLY DEFENSIVE IN TONE, CONCLUDED WITH HOPE THAT SAHARAN WAR WOULD END SOON BUT ALSO CALLED ON MAURITANIA TO BE PREPARED FOR ANY EVENTUALITY.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00252 01 OF 02 040311Z

END SUMMARY.

1. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MAURITANIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY MET IN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION JANUARY 29. KEY ITEM OF BUSINESS WAS EXPLANATION OF MAURITANIA'S SAHARAN POLICY BY PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH. COMMENTING THAT NATIONAL POLITICAL BUREAU OF PARTY MUST RENDER ACCOUNT OF ITS ACTIVITIES BEFORE MORE BROAD-BASED NATIONAL COUNCIL, OULD DADDAH EMPHASIZED THAT COUNCIL MUST NOT BE AN ECHO CHAMBER BUT RATHER AN ORGAN OF ACTION AND CONTROL. SUMMARY OF PRESIDENT'S LENGTHY SAHARA STATEMENT WAS PUBLISHED IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PAPER, CHAAB, ON JANUARY 30 AND 31. AFTER REVIEWING HISTORY OF TERRITORIAL PROBLEM, OULD DADDAH MADE FOLLOWING POINTS OF MORE TIMELY INTEREST.

2. AS CONCERNS ALGERIA, MAURITANIA HAS NOTICED SINCE BEGINNING OF 1975 A CERTAIN STIFFENING WHICH TRANSLATED ITSELF IN COOLNESS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, SERIES OF SUMMIT-LEVEL CONTACTS WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE AT ALGIERS AND BECHAR AND KING HASSAN SUBSEQUENTLY GAVE MAURITANIA OPINION THAT MISUNDERSTANDING WITH ALGERIA WAS BEING DISPELLED AND TENSION IN REGION WAS BEING RELIEVED. TWO FACTS LATER CONVINCED MAURITANIA THAT ALGERIA WAS SEEKING PRETEXT TO PROVOKE DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS WITH MAURITANIA. DURING OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SESSION PRECEDING KAMPALA SUMMIT, ALGERIAN DELEGATE DELIVERED VIOLENT ATTACK AGAINST MAURITANIA; AT SAME TIME ALGERIA DECLINED MAURITANIA'S INVITATION TO SEND DELEGATION TO FOURTH PARTY CONGRESS. BUT, OULD DADDAH DECLARED, THESE UNFRIENDLY ACTS DID NOT ALTER MAURITANIA'S WILLINGNESS TO MAINTAIN BEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA. THEREFORE, OULD DADDAH STATED, WHEN I WAS INVITED BY ALGERIAN PRESIDENT TO BECHAR ON NOVEMBER 10, 1975, I WENT.

3. OULD DADDAH SAID HE USED OCCASION OF BECHAR MEETING TO REVIEW WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE MAURITANIA'S POLICY ON SAHARA. OULD DADDAH POINTED OUT THAT AT LEAST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 NOUAKC 00252 01 OF 02 040311Z

TWO LEGIONS OF SO-CALLED SAHARAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT (POLISARIO) ARE MAURITANIANS. AMONG MEMBERS OF THIS ORGANIZATION ARE MANY SOUTHERN ALGERIANS SOME SOUTHERN MOROCCIANS AND EVEN SOME MAURITANIANS. HE EXPLAINED THAT TO REFER TO IT AS "SAHARAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT" IS TO TWIST REALITY. HE CLAIMED THAT MAURITANIA ASSISTED THIS MOVEMENT DURING PERIOD WHEN IT WAS ORGANIZATION OF TRUE SAHARANS TRYING TO LIBERATE THEMSELVES FROM COLONIAL CONTROL AND BEFORE IT DEVELOPED INTO BAND OF MERCENARIES. IF LATTER TRANSFORMED ITSELF INTO MOVE-

MENT WHICH WORKS AGAINST SAHARAN INTERESTS. OULD DADDAH SAID HE ALSO DISCUSSED "PROBLEM OF SELF-DETERMINATION" WITH BOUDEDIENE. OULD DADDAH UNDERLINED THAT MAURITANIA ALWAYS SUPPORTED THIS PRINCIPLE BUT "WE CONSIDER THAT IT MUST CONCERN ONLY THE SAHARANS". AT THE TIME, MAURITANIA KNOWS HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO ORGANIZE REFERENDUM LIMITED ONLY TO SAHARANS. CONCEPT OF A SAHARAN IS NOT AN ABSTRACTION FOR MAURITANIANS BECAUSE "WE ARE ALL SAHARANS AND WE CAN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN TRUE SAHARANS AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT". MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE INTO SAHARA TODAY, WHICH HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY OUTSIDERS, MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ORGANIZE TRUE AND VALID REFERENDUM PERMITTING REAL SAHARANS TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES. BECHAR MEETING MARKED RADICAL CHANGE IN POSITION OF ALGERIA, WHOSE PROPAGANDA ORGANS WERE IMMEDIATELY UNLEASHED AGAINST MAURITANIA WHILE BANDS ARMED BY ALGERIANS SET UPON OUR NATIONAL TERRITORY.

4. FACED WITH THIS SITUATION, MAURITANIA HAS NO OPTION BUT TO PREPARE FOR "REUNIFICATION OF ITS COUNTRY". IT WAS QUESTION NOT ONLY OF DEFENDING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY BUT OF UPHOLDING MAURITANIA DIGNITY. OULD DADDAH ARGUED THAT "OUR POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SEARCH FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO PROBLEM AND WE HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT PROBLEM CAN BE SETTLED WITHOUT SPILLING BLOOD". HE ADDED THAT THIS WAR WAS IMPOSED ON MAURITANIA, WHICH DID EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID IT. IN SPITE OF ARMED OPPOSITION BANDS, MAURITANIA DID NOT WANT TO SPILL ONE DROP OF BLOOD PRIOR TO BEING ATTACKED SIMULTANEOUSLY AT SEVERAL DIFFERENT POINTS WITHIN ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 NOUAKC 00252 01 OF 02 040311Z

TERRITORY. NOW THAT THIS HAS HAPPENED, MAURITANIA MUST DEFEND ITSELF.

5. DISCUSSING RECENT SITUATION, OULD DADDAH, SAID "WE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00252 02 OF 02 030848Z

70

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAM-01 OMB-01 /093 W

----- 023262

R 021230Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5069

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

FOSIF ROTA

COMSIXTHFLT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 0252

HAVE ALMOST COMPLETELY LIBERATED OUR SAHARAN TERRITORY. ALL IMPORTANT LOCATIONS ARE TODAY UNDER CONTROL OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION". HE NOTED THAT 650 KILOMETER-LONG IRON ORE RAILROAD WHICH RUNS ALONG SAHARAN BORDER HAS NEVER BEEN SEVERED. EXCEPT FOR MILITARY OUTPOST OF 'AIN BEN TILI, WHICH WAS EVACUATED BUT WILL BE RETAKEN AT APPROPRIATE TIME, NO POSITION WITHIN MAURITANIA HAS BEEN LOST TO ADVERSARY. ADMITTING SOME LOSS OF MAURITANIAN SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS, OULD DADDAH EMPHASIZED THAT "WE KILLED AND TOOK PRISONER HUNDREDS OF MEMBERS OF BANDS WHICH ATTACK US". MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT CONCLUDED: "TODAY WE HOPE WE ARE NEAR THE END OF THIS WAR WHICH WAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00252 02 OF 02 030848Z

IMPOSED UPON US, BUT WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR ALL EVENTUALITIES".

6. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST OCCASION GIRM HAS PUBLICLY CRITICIZED ALGERIA BY NAME SINCE BEGINNING OF SAHARA DISPUTE. REMARKS BY OULD DADDAH CONCERNING RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA ARE SURPRISINGLY FRANK AND WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY HASTEN DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. RATIONALIZATION OF MAURITANIA'S SAHARAN POL-

ICY BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF NATIONAL
COUNCIL IS SURPRISINGLY DEFENSIVE IN TONE. WE SUS-
PECT OULD DADDAH MADE PRESENTATION, AND SUBSEQUENTLY
PUBLICIZED IT, IN ORDER TO COUNTER DOUBTERS, AND
POSSIBLY CRITICS, WITHIN HIS GOVERNMENT. WE KNOW
THERE IS SOME OPPOSITION TO GIRM'S SAHARAN POLICY.
SHOULD GUERRILLA WAR CONTINUE FOR LONG PERIOD OF
TIME, NUMBER OF CRITICS IS LIKELY TO INCREASE.HANDYSIDE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DISPUTES, POLITICAL SITUATION, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NOUAKC00252
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760041-0444
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760291/aaaadckj.tel
Line Count: 231
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAHARA WATCH: MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT SPEAKS OUT SUMMARY: FOR FIRST TIME SINCE BEGINNING OF SAHARA DISPUTE
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SOPN, MR, AG, SS, (OULD DADDAH, MOKTAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006